

BALLET *Fantastique*

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DONNA MARISA BONTRAGER, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
HANNAH BONTRAGER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
60 E. 10th AVE., EUGENE, OREGON 97401 – 541.342.4611
www.balletfantastique.org



Left photo: Yin Yi (Elijah Labay and Hannah Bontrager perform “Wild Thing” at the prom)

Right photos: Kayla Martin (Ballet Fantastique dancers, Shelley James and Band in “Saw Her Standing There” and “Big Girls Don’t Cry”)

Dozens of print-resolution digital photos available—email info@balletfantastique.org

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CONTACT INFO

Hannah Bontrager, Ballet Fantastique Executive Director

Mobile phone/direct email (not for publication): (541) 206.8977, balletfantastique@gmail.com

CINDERELLA: A ROCK OPERA BALLET SET IN 1964 QUICK FACTS:

- Date: Sunday, August 5 at 4:00 pm
- All-original choreography by Ballet Fantastique co-directors/producers Donna and Hannah Bontrager
- Live on stage: Guest artists Shelley & Cal James and their “Agents of Unity” band join the Ballet Fantastique dancers on stage with 14 original arrangements of 60s billboard hits. Guest dancer James Fuller from Ballet Austin will dance the role of Prince Charming
- Tickets: \$26 for regular reserved seating (\$16 for youth/students with ID), PSU Box Office: 503-725-3307 (Hours: M-F 9 am–5 pm), or www.ticketmaster.com.
Special advance ticket prices: \$22 for regular reserved seating (\$12 for youth/students with ID) before July 21
- More info: www.balletfantastique.org

Rock opera ballet version of *Cinderella* with live music at Lincoln Performance Hall

Portland, OR—Imagine a version of *Cinderella* where the setting is 1964, the ball is prom, the dance moves are the Twist and the Mashed Potato (“It’s the latest/It’s the greatest”), and Cinderella goes by “Cindy.” Choreographers Donna Marisa and Hannah Bontrager have. The mother-daughter team directs the Eugene-based contemporary ballet company **Ballet Fantastique**, and will bring their critically acclaimed *Cinderella: A Rock Opera Ballet* to the Lincoln Performance Hall **Sunday, August 5 at 4 pm**. The all-original production recently sold out its run at the Hult Center for the Performing Arts and earned consecutive standing ovations.

Shelley and Cal James (of the famed Satin Love Orchestra) join the dancers live on stage with their **Agents of Unity Band** performing the show's soundtrack: fourteen hits from the early 60's, including "You Don't Own Me," "And Then He Kissed Me," "Today I Met the Boy I'm Gonna Marry," and "Wild Thing." Shelley created all-new arrangements of each of the songs per the Bontragers' choreographic needs and the subtly adapted storyline.

Highlights of the two-act ballet include: Stepsisters "Dris" and "Stasia" harass Cindy in "Big Girls Don't Cry," which opens Act I; the Sunnydale Fairy Godmother tells Prince Charming "You Can't Hurry Love," and the stepsisters dream of the ball in their nighties to "Mr. Sandman." In Act II, Cindy enters to the Beatles' "Saw Her Standing There," the clock strikes twelve to "Save the Last Dance for Me," and when Prince Charming shows up with Cindy's missing pointe shoe, we hear "My Boyfriend's Back." For each of the show's fourteen scenes, the Bontragers created choreography referencing authentic movement from the period, while still challenging the Ballet Fantastique company dancers' classical technique and virtuosity.

Ballet Fantastique, a contemporary chamber company comprised of seven professional dancers from across the US, has made a name for itself in these kinds of out-of-the-box revisions of classic story ballets. Ballet Fantastique's other original repertoire includes a raucous Wild West ballet version of Shakespeare's *As You Like It*; *Love at the Café Terrace*, a 25-minute ballet dramatizing Vincent Van Gogh's "Night at the Café Terrace" painting; and the sell-out *Arabian Nights*, a full-length original ballet dramatizing seven ancient tales from the *1,001 Nights*, each with a compelling, nuanced female protagonist.

Collaborating with live musicians is another Ballet Fantastique signature, and the idea for the "rock opera" version of *Cinderella* came when the Bontragers decided to produce a collaboration with Shelley and Cal James that wasn't what Hannah calls "just another mixed-repertory show... We wanted to take the standard ballet company/live music collaboration up a notch."

"We have been honored to work with Shelley and Cal on this challenging artistic endeavor. They're world-class musicians and such fun to collaborate with," says Donna. Shelley adds, "As musicians and songwriters, we strive to put a unique spin on any cover songs we arrange, so it's been a perfect match to be working with Ballet Fantastique for this creative twist on the *Cinderella* classic."

Shelley and Cal's Agents of Unity Band includes: Joe Weber (lead electric guitars), Rica Wright Weber (background vocals/percussion), Tom Teutsch (rhythm/backing guitars), Jason Palmer (drums), Shelley James (lead vocals/acoustic guitar), Cal James (bass guitar/background vocals), and Jennifer Scurlock (background vocals).

Ballet Fantastique was founded in 2000. The company has performed throughout the Northwest, and will tour its *As You Like It: A Wild West Ballet* to San Benedetto, Italy, in July 2013. *Cinderella: A Rock Opera Ballet* will be Ballet Fantastique's first performance in Portland. The ballet is appropriate for all ages; run time is 90 minutes, including a 20-minute intermission.

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